

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:PFOR, ZA, US

SUBJECT:MARSHALL SOGHOIAN CASE

REF: STATE 183130

1. DEPARTMENT DELIVERED TO ZAMBIAN CHARGE SEPTEMBER 28
WRITTEN RESPONSE TO AMBASSADOR MWILA'S SEPTEMBER 13 NOTE.
WHILE RESPONSE UNLIKELY TO BE TOTALLY SATISFACTORY TO GRZ,
IT IS AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE AT THIS STAGE OF THIS
FAIRLY COMPLEX LEGAL CASE. TEXT OF NOTE, OMITTING
COMPLIMENTARY OPENING AND CLOSE FOLLOWS.

2. QUOTE: THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE ACKNOWLEDGES RECEIPT,
SINCE THE ARREST OF MR. SOGHOIAN, OF FORMAL NOTIFICATION
OF HIS STATUS AS AN EMPLOYEE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA.

3. AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAVE
PREVIOUSLY INDICATED, MR. SOGHOIAN HAS BEEN CHARGED BY THE
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND INDICTED BY A FEDERAL GRAND
JURY FOR VIOLATION OF THE CRIMINAL LAWS OF THE UNITED
STATES INVOLVING THE UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF SURREPTITIOUS
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LISTENING DEVICES. HOWEVER, IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING FROM

DISCUSSIONS WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE THAT MR. SOGHOIAN HAS NOT BEEN AND PROBABLY WILL NOT BE INDICTED FOR ACTING IN THE UNITED STATES AS AN AGENT OF A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT WITHOUT NOTIFICATION TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

AS INITIALLY CONTEMPLATED. THE DECISION AS TO THE MERITS OF ANY CHARGES AGAINST HIM MUST REST WITH THE APPROPRIATE JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES IN THIS COUNTRY, AND IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE TO COMMENT ON THESE MERITS AT THIS TIME.

4. THE AMBASSADOR'S NOTE OF SEPTEMBER 13 REQUESTED THE RETURN TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA OF ITEMS WHICH WERE SEIZED IN CONNECTION WITH MR. SOGHOIAN'S ARREST AND WHICH ARE CLAIMED AS PROPERTY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA. IN AN ATTEMPT TO BE RESPONSIVE TO THAT REQUEST, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAVE DISCUSSED WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE THE POSSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE RELEASE OF ITEMS CLAIMED BY YOUR GOVERNMENT. THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE HAS INFORMED US THAT BEFORE ANY ITEMS CAN BE RELEASED TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA THE OWNERSHIP OF THOSE ITEMS MUST BE CLEARLY ESTABLISHED IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF ALL PARTIES CONCERNED. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE HAS INDICATED THAT IF YOUR GOVERNMENT SUBMITS SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE OF OWNERSHIP SUPPORTED BY AFFIDAVITS ASSERTING FORMAL CLAIM TO SPECIFIC ITEMS, OR FUNDS, THESE CLAIMS ARE SUPPORTED BY MR. SOGHOIAN, AND HIS COUNSEL STIPULATES TO THE RELEASE OF ITEMS WHICH MAY AFFECT HIS TRIAL, THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE WILL BE PREPARED TO MAKE PROMPT DETERMINATION AS TO WHETHER THE FUNDS OR SPECIFIC ITEMS MAY BE RELEASED OR MUST BE RETAINED FOR USE AS EVIDENCE IN FUTURE COURT PROCEEDINGS AGAINST MR. SOGHOIAN. WE MUST STRESS, HOWEVER, THAT CLAIMS WHICH ARE CONTESTED BY MR. SOGHOIAN, WHOSE POSSESSION OF THE ITEMS SEIZED AT THE TIME OF HIS ARREST WOULD ORDINARILY INDICATE OWNERSHIP BY HIM, COULD NOT BE PROMPTLY HONORED. IN ADDITION, ITEMS DEEMED NECESSARY AS EVIDENCE OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY ON THE PART OF MR. SOGHOIAN OR THE POSSESSION OF WHICH IS UNLAWFUL UNDER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNITED STATES STATUTES COULD NOT BE RELEASED.

5. WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT THE UNITED STATES INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE, IN ORDER TO SATISFY PENDING INCOME TAX CLAIMS AGAINST MR. SOGHOIAN, HAS PLACED CERTAIN LIENS AGAINST MR. SOGHOIAN'S ASSETS. THOSE LIENS PRESENTLY EXTEND TO ITEMS IN MR. SOGHOIAN'S POSSESSION AT THE TIME OF HIS ARREST. THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAS

INDICATED TO THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA CLAIMS AS ITS PROPERTY ITEMS SEIZED AT THE TIME OF THE ARREST OF MR. SOGHOIAN. WE BELIEVE THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF OWNERSHIP BY YOUR GOVERNMENT WHICH IS SATISFACTORY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE WOULD BE SIMILARLY ACCEPTED BY THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE,

AND THAT THE LIENS WILL NOT IMPEDE THE RETURN OF ITEMS BELONGING TO YOUR GOVERNMENT.

6. THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE WILL CONTINUE TO EXPLORE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE THE POSSIBLE RELEASE OF PROPERTY CLAIMED BY YOUR GOVERNMENT. WHILE WE UNDERSTAND THE CONCERN OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, WE BELIEVE THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT SHOULD APPRECIATE THAT THE ABILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO SATISFY YOUR GOVERNMENT'S REQUESTS MUST BE LIMITED BY THE OBLIGATION OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO ENFORCE FAITHFULLY ITS OWN LAWS. IN VIEW OF THE COMPLEXITY OF THIS MATTER (IN WHICH AT LEAST THREE AGENCIES OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS THE JUDICIAL BRANCH ARE NOW INTERESTED), IT MAY BE TO THE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR GOVERNMENT TO EMPLOY A COMPETENT ATTORNEY TO REPRESENT ITS INTERESTS DIRECTLY.

7. I HAVE NOTED WITH PLEASURE THE STATEMENT IN THE AMBASSADOR'S NOTE THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT HAD NO INTENTION TO DEROGATE THE STRONG FOUNDATIONS AND PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. WE ALSO NOTED THE ASSERTION THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT " VIEWS THE ARREST OF MR. MARSHALL SOGHOIAN AS AN ACTION CALCULATED TO EMBARRASS THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT AND ITS PEOPLE". THAT ASSERTION, AS HAS BEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STATED ORALLY TO OFFICERS OF YOUR EMBASSY AND IN A MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT KAUNDA, IS WITHOUT FOUNDATION. END QUOTE
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